

FAMILY-OWNED · MOUNT WAVERLEY · 25+ YEARS

Parent Handbook

Everything you need to know about your child's days at Syndal Childcare & Early Learning Centre. 2026–27 edition.

Syndal Childcare & ELC

6 Huxtable Street, Mount Waverley VIC 3149

(03) 9802 7453 · info1@syndalchildcare.com

syndalchildcare.com

Open 7:00am – 6:00pm, Monday to Friday

WELCOME

We're so glad you're here

Choosing care for your child is a big decision. Thank you for trusting us with it. We know it's a real gift of trust, and we take it seriously.

Syndal has cared for Mount Waverley families for more than 25 years, and many generations of children have come through our doors. We're a small, family-owned centre with a stable team, so your child sees the same familiar faces every day.

The best care happens when families and educators work together. Your ideas, questions and feedback help us give your child the best possible start, so please talk to us any time.

This handbook explains how our centre works day to day. Please read it, ask us about anything that isn't clear, and sign the acknowledgement on the last page.

At a glance

What	Details
Opening hours	7:00am – 6:00pm, Monday to Friday, 52 weeks a year (closed on Victorian public holidays)
Ages	6 weeks to school age
Rooms	Ducklings (babies) · Dolphins (toddlers) · Kinder Room (3–5 years)
Daily fee	\$155 per day before the Child Care Subsidy (CCS)
Included	All meals and snacks, nappies, sunscreen, and free orientation
Kinder	Funded 3- and 4-year-old kinder, in long day care or as Free Sessional Kinder
Sign in / out	Every day on the Xplor iPad at the entrance
Updates	Photos and learning stories through Storypark
Late pick-up	\$3 per minute, per child, after 6:00pm
Changes or leaving	Two weeks' written notice

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SECTION 1

1 Our philosophy

We want every child to feel safe, loved and that they belong, so they can grow into confident, curious learners.

Children are capable learners

Children are naturally curious. We build on each child's strengths and interests through play, and help them become confident lifelong learners.

Safe to take healthy risks

A safe, secure environment lets children try new things and build resilience for life's challenges.

Families come first

You are your child's first and most important teacher. We welcome your involvement and input into our program and philosophy.

Relationships matter

We help children connect, communicate and build friendships, so their social skills grow every day.

Learning through play

We listen to children, include them in decisions and value who they are now, while extending what they know.

Part of our community

We take part in local events, connect families with local support, and welcome all cultures and family values.

Acknowledgement of Country. We acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong peoples, the Traditional Owners of the land on which we learn and play, and we include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in our program.

Our program follows the National Quality Framework, the Early Years Learning Framework (*Belonging, Being & Becoming*) and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework. We support our educators with ongoing training, mentoring and reflection so the quality of teaching keeps improving.

2 Getting started

Before your first day

- ☐ Complete the enrolment form, including who can collect your child and emergency contacts.
- ☐ Apply for the Child Care Subsidy through myGov (see section 7).
- ☐ Give us your child's current immunisation history statement.
- ☐ If your child has asthma, allergies, anaphylaxis, diabetes or another health need, give us their medical management plan. We'll also make a risk plan with you. Care can't start until we have the plan.
- ☐ Give us a copy of any court orders about your child.
- ☐ Pay the two-week deposit (see section 6).

Free orientation

Starting somewhere new is a big step for little ones, and for parents too. Before your child starts, you're invited to **three free one-hour orientation sessions**, together with your child. You'll get to know the room, the routine and the educators, and tell us everything that will help your child settle.

Settling in

There may be tears and extra-tight hugs at goodbye for the first few weeks. That's normal, and it's often harder on parents than on children. Our educators offer plenty of cuddles and reassurance. You're welcome to call during the day, and we'll share photos so you can see how your child is going.

If your child is finding it hard, talk to the Room Leader. Together we'll make a plan to help them feel at home.

Building a strong partnership

The more we know about your child's routines, culture, likes, dislikes and needs, the more our centre feels like an extension of home. Please keep sharing with your child's educators. Quick chats at drop-off are great, and you can book a longer meeting with your child's educators any time.

SECTION 3

3 Your child's day

Our rooms

Ducklings

Babies and young toddlers, roughly 6 weeks to 2 years. Up to 8 children a day, with their own outdoor space.

Dolphins

Toddlers and pre-kinder, roughly 2 to 3 years. Up to 12 children a day.

Kinder Room

3 to 5 years, with a teacher-led funded kinder program. Up to 17 children a day.

Children move to the next room when they're ready. We talk with you first, assess your child's readiness, and arrange visits to the new room so the change feels easy.

Learning through play

Each day includes play-based experiences in literacy, numeracy, music, movement, creativity and the outdoors, built around your child's interests. We also focus on confidence, resilience, getting along with others and self-care. Educators set goals for your child, observe their progress, and plan the next steps with you.

Storypark: see your child's day

Learning stories, photos, videos and program updates are shared with you on Storypark. You'll get your login when you start. We'd love your comments, because they help shape what we do next.

Meals and snacks

Our cook prepares all meals fresh on site from a four-week rotating menu (displayed in the foyer), guided by Healthy Eating Advisory Service and Department of Health advice. Water and milk are offered with meals, and water is available all day.

Meal	Ducklings	Dolphins & Kinder
Breakfast	Bring your child's breakfast from home and they can eat it before 8:00am	
Morning tea	From 9:00am (progressive)	
Lunch	11:15am	11:45am
Afternoon tea	From 2:30pm (progressive)	
Late snack	4:30pm	5:30pm

We are a nut-free and egg-free centre. Please keep this in mind when packing breakfast. Tell us in writing about any allergy, medical, cultural or religious dietary needs so our cook can plan for your child.

Rest and sleep

Every child rests according to their own needs. Tell your child's Room Leader about their routine at home and we'll follow it as closely as safe sleep practices allow. Children are never made to sleep. Quiet activities are available for those who don't need a nap. Comfort items like a dummy, blanket or soft toy are welcome.

Toilet learning

We follow your child's lead and never pressure them. When they show interest, we encourage them and keep you updated. Doing the same thing at home and at the centre makes a big difference. Please pack extra clothes, underpants and spare shoes while your child is learning.

SECTION 4

4 What to bring

Pack a labelled backpack your child can recognise and open by themselves.

Every day

- ☐ A drink bottle
- ☐ A legionnaire or bucket hat (we're SunSmart)
- ☐ A full change of clothes, kept in the bag
- ☐ A comfort toy or blanket for rest time, if your child has one
- ☐ Breakfast, if your child will eat at the centre (before 8:00am, nut and egg free)

Only if needed

- ☐ Nappy cream
- ☐ Your own sunscreen, if your child has sensitive skin
- ☐ Extra underpants and spare shoes during toilet learning
- ☐ Medication, handed to an educator (see section 9)

Nappies are included

For long day care, **we supply nappies every day as part of your fee**, so there's nothing extra to buy. If you'd prefer your child's own brand, pack at least four a day. Families in Free Sessional Kinder only (no long day care) need to bring enough nappies for each kinder day.

What to wear

- Comfy play clothes that can get messy with paint, glue, water and sand.
- Tops with sleeves that cover the shoulders (no singlets, thin straps or midriff tops).
- Clothes your child can take on and off by themselves, especially for toileting.
- Safe shoes for running and climbing (no thongs, slippery shoes or long skirts).

Please label everything with your child's name. Special toys and treasures are best left at home, as we can't be responsible for loss or breakage.

SECTION 5

5 Kinder at Syndal

We offer funded 3- and 4-year-old kinder in two ways. Choose the one that suits your family.

	Integrated Kinder (in long day care)	Free Sessional Kinder
Days	Any days you book, Monday to Friday	Monday and Wednesday (standard program)
Hours	Drop off and pick up any time 7:00am – 6:00pm	8:30am – 4:00pm (7.5 hours a day)
When	All year, 52 weeks, including school holidays	Victorian school terms only
Cost	\$155 a day, less CCS and the Free Kinder offset	Free for eligible children
Teacher	VIT-registered Early Childhood Teacher	
Funded hours	15 hours a week / 600 hours a year	
Food	All meals and snacks included	Lunch and two snacks included

Before and after kinder care (optional)

On sessional kinder days you can add care before or after kinder, so the day fits your work hours.

Session	Time	Pre-booked	Casual
Before kinder	7:00 – 8:30am	\$23.25	\$25.00
After kinder	4:00 – 6:00pm	\$31.00	\$33.00
Long day care	7:00am – 6:00pm	\$155 per day	

The Child Care Subsidy may reduce the cost of before/after care and long day care for eligible families. You never have to buy before/after care or long day care to get a free sessional kinder place.

Free Kinder and the One Funded Place rule

The Victorian Government's Free Kinder program funds one kinder place per child. Families nominate **one** service to receive their child's funding by completing the One Funded Place Declaration. In Integrated Kinder, eligible families get the **Free Kinder offset** off their long day care fees, shown fortnightly on your Xplor statement. We'll email you when the offset starts and stops.

More hours of 4-year-old kinder

Children eligible for more funded hours can also attend Thursday and/or Friday, 8:30am – 4:00pm, at no cost. We'll confirm the available days when eligibility is confirmed.

Early Start Kindergarten

ESK gives 15 funded hours to eligible children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from refugee or asylum-seeker backgrounds, and children known to Child Protection.

Good to know

- **No registration, waitlist or admin fees**, for kinder or any other enrolment.
- **Priority of Access** rules apply to funded kinder places. Choosing not to buy extra care never disadvantages your child.
- **No compulsory levies**. Donations are always voluntary, and regular excursions and incursions that are part of the kinder program are not charged separately. No child misses out because of financial hardship.
- **Sessional families** get no invoice for the free program. Any paid care (before/after care or long day care) appears on your fortnightly Xplor statement, paid in advance.
- **Pick-up**: sessional-only children by 4:00pm, and children in after-kinder care by 6:00pm. The late fee applies after that.
- **Changing services**: if your child moves to another service during the year, their Free Kinder funding moves with them.

Ask us for our Free Kinder Enrolment Policy and Kindergarten Payment of Fees Policy for the full details.

6 Fees and payments

Our daily fee: \$155

This is the full fee before the Child Care Subsidy. Most families pay much less once CCS is applied. It includes all meals and snacks, nappies, sunscreen, Storypark updates and free orientation.

How payment works

- **Deposit:** two weeks of full fees before your child starts.
- **Direct debit:** fees are paid two weeks in advance from your nominated account, currently every second Wednesday.
- **Until your CCS is linked** in our system, full fees are charged.
- **Dishonoured payments** attract a fee from the direct debit provider (not from Syndal). Repeated dishonours or late payments may lead to care being suspended.

Absences, holidays and public holidays

Fees are charged for every day your child is booked, whether they attend or not, because our costs stay the same. This includes sick days, family holidays and public holidays that fall on your usual days.

Changing days or leaving

- Please give **two weeks' written notice** to change days or cancel care.
- If your child is away for two weeks in a row and we haven't heard from you, we'll end the booking and charge full fees. CCS isn't paid for a notice period your child doesn't attend.
- We can't hold a place while you're away. Places fill quickly, so we can't promise the same days will be free when you return.

Late pick-up: \$3 per minute, per child, after 6:00pm. By law no children can be at the centre after closing, and two educators must stay until every child is collected. If we can't reach you or your emergency contacts within 30 minutes of closing, we must contact Child Protection and Victoria Police.

As running costs rise, fees are reviewed from time to time. We work hard to keep them as low as we can without lowering quality, and we'll always give you notice before any change.

SECTION 7

7 Child Care Subsidy (CCS)

CCS is paid by the Australian Government straight to us, so you only pay the gap.

Setting it up

- ☐ Apply for CCS through your myGov account (Centrelink) before your child starts.
- ☐ Confirm your enrolment with us in myGov once we send it.
- ☐ Keep your income estimate and details up to date to avoid debts at the end of the year.

How much you get

Your percentage

Your combined family income sets your subsidy rate. Families with more than one child aged 5 or under may get a higher rate for the younger children.

Your hours

Since January 2026, every eligible family gets **at least 72 subsidised hours a fortnight** (about three days a week) per child. You can get **up to 100 hours** if you have more than 48 hours of work, study or volunteering a fortnight, or for First Nations children.

To be eligible, your child must be 13 or younger and not in secondary school, be up to date with immunisations, and you or your partner must meet residency rules. Services Australia usually holds back 5% of your CCS until you balance at the end of the financial year.

Absences

CCS covers up to **42 absence days per child each financial year**, and more in some situations (please talk to us). A public holiday counts as an absence if it falls on your child's usual day. You can check your child's absences in your Centrelink online account.

CCS and Free Kinder

Free Kinder (Victorian Government) and CCS (Australian Government) are separate. CCS doesn't apply to free sessional kinder hours because there's no fee, but it may apply to paid before/after care and long day care.

Find out more: Centrelink 136 150 · my.gov.au · education.gov.au/early-childhood. Try the calculator on our website to estimate your gap fee.

8 Drop-off and pick-up

Sign in and out every day on Xplor

It's the law, it keeps everyone safe in an emergency, and it's how your CCS is calculated. The Xplor iPad is at the entrance, and we'll show you how it works during orientation.

When you arrive and leave

- Hand your child directly to an educator, and let an educator know when you're taking your child home.
- Let us know if your arrival or pick-up time will be different that day.
- Take your time. You're always welcome to stay a while at drop-off and pick-up. It's a great moment to catch up with educators.

Who can collect your child

- We only release children to people listed as authorised on the enrolment form and in Xplor, unless you've made other arrangements with the Director.
- If we don't know the person, they'll need to show photo ID.
- Both parents have equal rights to collect their child unless a court order says otherwise. Please give us a copy of any court orders, because without one we can't stop a parent collecting their child.

9 Health and safety

When to keep your child at home

When your child is unwell, home is the best place to rest and recover, and it stops illness spreading. Please keep your child home, and let us know, if they've had any of these in the **past 24 hours**:

- Fever of 37.8°C or higher
- Vomiting or upset stomach
- Diarrhoea or loose bowel motions
- Severe or constant coughing
- A runny green nose
- Red, swollen or discharging eyes
- Rashes, spots or swelling
- Open or weeping sores
- Being unusually tired, irritable or lethargic

Please don't send your child if they've had Panadol or Nurofen for a temperature in the past 24 hours, and always tell us about any medicine given at home so we never double-dose. Children starting antibiotics need to stay home for the first 24 hours.

If your child becomes unwell at the centre, we'll call you to collect them, or your emergency contact if we can't reach you. Ratios mean we can't give one-on-one care for long. After an illness, check with us whether you need a medical certificate before your child returns.

Medication

- Complete and sign a medication authorisation form.
- Medication must be in its original packaging with a pharmacy label showing your child's name, the medicine, the dose, the doctor or pharmacist, the date of issue and the expiry date.
- Always hand medication to an educator. Never leave it in your child's bag.
- Never add medication to your child's bottle.
- Paracetamol is only given in an emergency, with your written consent.

Immunisation: No Jab, No Play

Victorian law requires children to be fully vaccinated for their age (or on an approved catch-up schedule, or with a medical exemption) before they start. Give us your child's immunisation history statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (via Medicare in myGov), and an updated copy each time your child is vaccinated. During an outbreak, children who aren't immunised may need to stay home for their own safety.

Accidents and incidents

Qualified first aiders are always on duty. Any incident, injury, trauma or illness is recorded, and we'll ask you to sign the report. We'll tell you about any incident within 24 hours and report notifiable

incidents as required. If your child needs urgent treatment and we can't reach you, we'll contact your emergency contact or call emergency services, so please keep your contacts up to date.

Sun protection

We're a SunSmart centre all year, with extra care from October to April. Children wear a hat outside (no hat means playing in the shade or indoors), and educators wear hats too. We provide SPF 30+ sunscreen, applied at least 20 minutes before going outside. If your child has sensitive skin, bring your own and fill in a sunscreen form with an educator.

Hot days

When it's 30°C or hotter, children play indoors, and we make sure everyone stays cool and well hydrated.

Emergency drills

We practise emergency evacuations every three months, at different times of day, so children and educators know exactly what to do. Evacuation plans and fire extinguishers are located throughout the centre.

10 Phones, photos and privacy

To protect every child's safety and privacy, we follow the National Model Code for taking images in early childhood services.

For families and visitors

- Please don't use phones or other devices in children's rooms. Keep them in your pocket or bag.
- Please don't take photos, videos or recordings of other children.

For our team

- Personal devices (phones, smartwatches, smart glasses, USBs and more) are not used in children's rooms.
- Photos and videos are only taken on centre-owned devices, stored securely, and deleted in line with our records policy.
- We only use images of your child with your written permission.

Children can't bring devices unless they're needed for health or disability support.

Your family's information

Everything you share with us, including addresses, phone numbers and custody details, is seen only by our administration team and the educators caring for your child. We never share it without your consent, and every conversation with us is kept professional and confidential.

Our policies

All our policies and procedures are available in the foyer and office, and you can ask the Director for any policy. We review them regularly and welcome your feedback.

11 Being part of our community

Our door is always open. However much time you have, there's a way to be involved.

Share your culture

Share a song, story, food or tradition from your family. Our centre is culturally diverse, and we love helping every child feel they belong.

Read a story

Children love being read to. Talk to your Room Leader about a time that suits you.

Share a skill

Music, craft, cooking or your job can be a wonderful learning experience for the children.

Donate recyclables

Clean food boxes and containers, ribbon, wrapping paper and paper towel tubes are always welcome. Please no toilet rolls or egg cartons, for hygiene and allergy reasons.

Birthdays

Birthdays are special! We'll sing to your child and bake a healthy cake to share with their friends.

Visitors, excursions and incursions

From time to time we have special visitors and activities, like Australian animal visits or the fire brigade. We'll always let you know ahead of time.

Students and volunteers

We sometimes welcome students and volunteers. They are always extra to our staff ratios and are supervised by a qualified educator at all times.

Your suggestions

Have an idea to make Syndal even better? We'd love to hear it.

12 Questions and concerns

No question or concern is too small. Most things are sorted quickly with a chat.

Step	Who to talk to
1	Your child's Room Leader. Speak to them in person, or ask for a time to talk.
2	Our Director. If it isn't resolved, call (03) 9802 7453 or email info1@syndalchildcare.com to arrange a meeting.
3	The regulator. If you're still not satisfied, contact the Victorian Early Childhood Regulatory Authority (VECRA) on 1300 307 415, email vecra@education.vic.gov.au , or visit vecra.vic.gov.au .

Questions about fees or CCS are best raised with us first. For CCS policy, contact the Australian Government Department of Education. If you believe a child is in immediate danger, call 000.

Welcome to the Syndal family

We're looking forward to getting to know you and your child, and to many happy days together.

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN

Family acknowledgement

Please sign this page and return it to the office (or a signed photo or scan by email) before your child starts.

I/We have read and understood the Syndal Childcare & ELC Parent Handbook 2026–27, including the fees and payment terms, notice periods, late pick-up fee, health and safety requirements, and our responsibilities as a family. I/We have had the chance to ask questions.

CHILD'S NAME

ROOM

PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME

SIGNATURE

PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME

SIGNATURE

DATE

Office use: received by _____ on ____ / ____ / ____